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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY INFORMATION REPORT

25X1A

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Navigation, Security Measures, Ships Observed in Port

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1. Navigation and Pilotage

We were advised in approaching the Gulf of Danzig to remain east of 18-55-00E as far as the Hel Peninsula, because of the danger of mines west of that line. Two buoys not shown on H. O. No. 4876 numbered HL1 and HL2 were at 54-34-50N, 18-51-41E and 54-34-50N, 18-44-19E respectively. The first was a combination light and whistle buoy with a light characteristic of two flashes at seven-second intervals, while the second was flashing at a three-second period. Both were in the shape of a double cone and had red and white horizontal stripes. The recommended course was to proceed between the tip of the Hel Peninsula and a line drawn between the two buoys. The pilot, a middle aged man accompanied by a very young apprentice, was taken aboard near the occulting red buoy which marks the eastern limit of the anchorage. Our ship remained in anchorage for several hours before entering the harbor. Just inside the breakwater two tugs came to assist the ship to its berth in the Indian Quay, because due to the constricted nature of the port manoeuvring is difficult and tugs are required. The draft of our ship in entering was 28'6". We departed in ballast. Two green buoys marked a wreck in the awanport ¹ close to the entrance to the Kanal Portowy, but it is not shown on H.O. No. 4925.

2. Security Measures

Upon arriving at the Indian Quay our ship was boarded by a party of 25 or 30 armed men who conducted a three-hour thorough search. Only the Captain's cabin received a superficial inspection, and all spaces had to be opened. Cameras on board ship were the only articles sealed, and no interest was evinced in the amount of money on board nor were there any restrictions on taking money ashore. The ship was searched again prior to departure, particular interest being shown in its deep tanks. Three guards were stationed on the quay by the ship, one each at the bow, stern and gangway, and a fourth on top of the mechanical equipment used to load our cargo. Searchlights on the Polish Quay, opposite our ship, were used at night to illuminate both the ship and the surrounding water.

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I observed many other armed guards in the port area guarding merchant vessels, including Polish merchantmen, at the piers, especial precautions being taken with the latter because of their contact with the non-Communist world. A large police barracks, housing at least 300 security guards, was located behind government shed No. 2 near the Rotterdam Quay, and from this building details were sent out every two hours. Passes and seaman's papers were checked by the gangway guard, and not only our crew but everyone coming aboard, including workers assisting in the unloading, were required to have passes. A careful check was kept of all such people, and once the guard came on board looking for a particular individual who had not left the ship with the workman who had accompanied him.

3. Vessels Observed

I observed one Polish naval vessel, an auxiliary-type ship in the Gulf of Danzig, and a Coast Guard patrol-type boat patrolling the Gulf of Danzig from Gdynia to the Hel Peninsula. I saw one patrol boat in the harbor, but no other naval vessels. There were a large number of ships in the harbor at Gdynia, many of which were Polish ships engaged in trade with Communist China, whose cargoes consisted chiefly of tea and rubber. Two Swedish ships were unloading cement and sugar at the Polish Quay, while at the Indian Quay the Italian ship La Valetta was discharging a cargo of rye from South America. Also at the Indian Quay was a Polish vessel unloading tea, rubber and dried skins from China, and at the American Quay was a Greek-owned ship flying the Liberian flag, discharging cargo at the Rotterdam Quay. Many Soviet and Polish ships were in Basin numbers one and two; all of them were Liberty-ship size and either discharging or loading cargo. A French merchantman was loading coal at Skarboferm, and a UK ship discharged half its cargo at the Silesian Quay. Two Finnish ships laden with lumber were in Basin No. 2. Coming into Gdynia I observed a new Polish motor ship also arriving, apparently on its maiden voyage from a North Sea port.

4. Port Facilities

Our cargo, consisting of 9,908 tons of grain was unloaded at Indian Quay by mechanical handling facilities, one electrical grain-loading crane being used. Three shifts, each with only six or seven workmen, were used to maintain a 24-hour working day. Each shift was divided between those operating the electrical equipment and those working on board the ship. The entire operation was fairly efficient, although not as fast as West European ports. I saw additional cranes, two or three in number, being used to unload a Polish vessel forward of our ship. One floating crane was tied up at the Indian Quay but I did not observe port facilities other than those near the Indian Quay. I saw no shipbuilding or ship repairing activity at Gdynia.

5. Miscellaneous

During our stay in Gdynia no attempt was made by the Polish authorities to check on the amount and type of currency taken ashore, but since the official rate of exchange was so unfavorable, being four zloties to the US dollar, everyone used the black market where the rate was approximately 60 to US\$1. One pack of US cigarettes could be sold for the equivalent of US\$2.50. Crew members, however, were restricted as to the number of cigarettes which could be taken ashore, the daily allowance being two packs a day per person. Purchases of fresh foods, vegetables and fish were made from the state-owned ships' chandlers, BALTONA, which also

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operated "department" stores offering goods at attractive prices to foreign seamen, but not available to the local populace. There was a scarcity in the city of stores and shops. I was told that there is a large amount of trade between Polish ports and Argentina, Poland exchanging coal and cement for Argentine grain.

6. There was practically no entertainment available at Gdynia, except for the single large International Club, operated by the government for foreign merchant seamen, and existing primarily for propaganda purposes. This club, which was nicely furnished and contained many pictures of Communist leaders, closed promptly at midnight. Bus service was provided to transport the guests back to their ships.
7. I observed considerable air activity during my visit to Gdynia. Daily, at least three or four jet aircraft, which I believed to be MIG types, approached from the east and engaged in manoeuvres above the Gulf of Danzig, later returning eastward. On one or two days the number of aircraft was increased to six. I did not note any other planes.

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LIBRARY SUBJECT AND AREA CODES

C-02-0615 10/54

756.541	55M
756.571	41M(PM)
756.571	19M(PM)
756.571	21M(PM)
756.571	22M(PM)
756.543	55M
772.1	55M(VB)

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